

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 10 and replaces the original sheet with Fig. 10.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet[s]

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 6-8, 10-14, 18-20 and 22-24 are pending in this application. Applicant appreciates the Office Action's indication that claims 3, 7-9, 11, 15, 19-21 and 23 contain allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, claims 1 and 12 are amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter recited in claims 3 and 15. Claims 3 and 15 are canceled. Claims 7 and 19 are amended to change their dependency.

Claims 1 and 12 are also amended to obviate informalities as the Examiner suggested. Fig. 10 and the title are amended, as the Examiner requested. No new matter is added. Claims 4, 5, 9, 16, 17 and 21 are withdrawn in view of the finality of the election of species requirement.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the drawings. Fig. 10 is amended to be designated by "related art" as the Examiner suggested. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the specification. The title is amended, as the Examiner requested. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the claims. Claims 1 and 12 are amended, as the Examiner suggested. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 6-8, 10, 11, 13-15, 18-20, 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 1 is amended as the Examiner suggested. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 6-8, 10, 11, 13-15, 18-20, 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 12-14 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0126228 to Yajima et al. ("Yajima") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,829,031 to Numata et al. ("Numata"); rejects claims 6 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yajima in view of Numata further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,359,721 to Fujimori et al. ("Fujimori"); and rejects claims 10 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yajima in view of Numata further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,781,641 to Okada et al. ("Okada"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As outlined above, independent claims 1 and 12 are amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter recited in claims 3 and 15. Thus, claims 1 and 12, and claims 2, 6-8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18-20 and 22-24 depending therefrom, are patentable over the applied references. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 6-8, 10-14, 18-20 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Non-elected claims 4, 5, 9, 16, 17 and 21 are patentable at least for the patentability of claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for additional features they recite. Accordingly, rejoinder and allowance of claims 4, 5, 9, 16, 17 and 21 are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:GXL/gck

Attachment:
Replacement Sheet

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